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SECURITY INFORMATION

17498

Pakistan

Punial Incident

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1. In the spring of 1951, an attempt was made to dispose the Rajah of Punial by his subjects. This attempt was aided and abetted if not originated by his old rival the Mir of Hunza. The pretext which was used was that the Rajah exacted too high a tax when his son was married. The revolt was nipped in the bud but eight people were killed. The Pakistan government forced the Rajah to reduce the tax and his people to retain him. The people of Punial still wanted to dispose the Rajah after the settlement but the government could not allow this as it would have made the Mir of Hunza more powerful which is certainly against the Pakistan government policy, and which is to reduce the power of the local rulers as much as possible. This incident also reassured the other local rulers that the government would protect them from aggressive neighbors.
2. By keeping the local ruler weak and impressing independence among the younger of their people, especially when they are down country in the army and working, Pakistan is gaining citizens and the Mir for instance, is losing his subjects. Some of the returnees for instance will show up at festive occasions with the shirt tucked in their pants, something which their fathers never would have done.
3. The Mir for his alleged part in the incident was called down country and "given the word". He was also prevented from receiving Mr Justice W O Douglas in Hunza but instead was summoned to Gilgit to see him. Douglas was told that the trail was impassable to Hunza and that the Mir was to come to see him in Gilgit which he did promptly over this impassable trail.

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